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SUBJECT: GERMANY SUPPORTS EUMM BUT SEEKS REALISTIC GOALS

Classified By: ACTING POLITICAL MINISTER COUNSELOR STAN OTTO FOR REASON  
S 1.4 (c) AND (d).

11. (C) SUMMARY. Germany fully expects the EU Monitoring Mission (EUMM) mandate in Georgia to be extended for a year, despite some EU members' concerns that the mission was never envisioned as the sole international mission in the country. Although Germany supports extending the EUMM, some within the MFA have strong reservations, and the MFA office responsible for the region is shifting its focus away from Georgia -- where Berlin sees a "Cyprus situation" developing -- to Central Asia. MFA and Chancellery contacts hope the U.S. is prepared to enter into "strategic discussions" about our mutual goals because Berlin sees little hope that the Russians will suddenly become more tractable regarding Georgia. While maintaining a strict non-recognition policy regarding South Ossetia and Abkhazia, they stress the need to look for areas of possible cooperation and to begin frank discussion concerning what we hope to achieve in various international fora. END SUMMARY.

EUMM SEEN AS USEFUL; ROLE FOR U.S.?

12. (C) Germany is pleased with the EU's decision to extend the EUMM mandate for one year (until September 2010), but MFA Deputy Division Head for the South Caucasus and Central Asia Maria Gosse shared that some within the MFA were greatly concerned by the reality on the ground in Georgia. Berlin and the EU as a whole never envisioned the EUMM as the sole international presence in Georgia. Moreover, given recent violence in Georgia, some EU members and even some German officials were hesitant to extend the mandate for an additional year. The relationship between Berlin and Tbilisi has not been a warm one in the past, and some MFA officials suspect that Georgia was behind the July 21 attack on an EUMM convoy.

13. (C) However, Berlin views the EUMM as useful in preventing a flare-up in violence because "both sides of the conflict support the mission." The Russians hope the EUMM provides a check on "Saakashvili's erratic behavior," and the Georgians can point to EUMM observations when the Russians make claims concerning Georgian military aggression. Berlin also is considering whether some kind of U.S. participation in the EUMM would be helpful. Although Head of Recruitment for the Center for International Peace Operations Behrendt quickly pointed out that U.S. observers in direct contact with Russian soldiers "may be a bad idea," he could envision the U.S. in a support role for the mission. He indicated that the MFA has not reached a decision on whether it supports U.S. involvement.

SEEKING STRATEGIC DISCUSSIONS

14. (C) Although Germany continues to support the territorial integrity of Georgia and maintains a strict non-recognition policy regarding South Ossetia and Abkhazia, MFA and Chancellery contacts stress that Russia will "never back down from recognition" of the two breakaway provinces. Without offering concrete suggestions for what "strategic

discussions" should look like, contacts identified the need for a better understanding "among ourselves" for what we hope to realistically achieve in Georgia. Berlin itself is not unified in how useful some international fora, such as the Geneva Talks, are for furthering our common goals in Georgia. While the MFA saw the most recent round of the Geneva Talks on July 1 as another attempt by Russia to weaken the process, the Chancellery viewed the Abkhaz decision to support the Incident Prevention and Response Mechanism as a breakthrough that the Geneva Talks made possible. According to the MFA, the Abkhaz also are eager to have the UN return in some form to the region.

¶5. (C) Overall, the Chancellery and MFA judge that a "Cyprus-like situation" is developing in Georgia, with each side settling into their fixed, uncompromising positions. Given the extremely small likelihood that the situation will change, the MFA Division for the South Caucasus and Central Asia is beginning to shift its focus from Georgia to Central Asia, where future economic developments seem more promising. Germany led the launch of an EU Central Asia policy when Berlin held the EU presidency in 2007, and the MFA hopes that Central Asia will once again be an EU priority.  
Pollard